



## CARPE DIEM

On December 9, the Louisiana breeding industry gained a significant new addition to its stallion colony. Previously a sire at WinStar Farm, multiple Grade 1 winner Carpe Diem has been relocated to Acadiana Equine at Copper Crowne. The property of a syndicate headed by Dawn and Jeff Picard’s Picard Racing and Acadiana Equine’s David Tillson, the stallion is slated to stand the 2022 season for \$3,500—a very reasonable price given his combination of performance, pedigree, conformation, and previous stud performance.

Carpe Diem first seized attention in the auction ring. A \$550,000 yearling at the 2013 Keeneland September sale, he commanded a sale-topping price of \$1.6 million at the 2014 Ocala Breeders’ Sales selected sale of 2-year-olds in training after turning in a smooth furlong in :10.1 during the under tack show. He justified his price tag by breaking his maiden in a 5½ furlong maiden special weight at Saratoga, earning designation as a “Rising Star” from Thoroughbred Daily News. He then headed to Keeneland for the 8½ furlong Claiborne Breeders’ Futurity (G1). Cruising close to the early pace as the 2-1 favorite, he got to the front after six furlongs and from there on widened away, hitting the wire 6¼ lengths ahead of eventual millionaire Mr. Z. Future Travers Stakes (G1) winner Keen Ice was in the beaten field, as was three-time juvenile stakes winner Conquest Tsunami (a grade 3 winner at 3). Carpe Diem was not quite able to complete a perfect season in the Sentient Jets Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (G1) but closed well to take second behind Texas Red after lagging early on.

Considered a prime Triple Crown prospect, Carpe Diem jumped straight into graded stakes company to begin his 3-year-old season. He lived up to the confidence placed in him by rolling to a five-length win in the 8½ furlong Tampa Bay Derby (G2). Next up was the Toyota Blue Grass Stakes (G1), and Carpe Diem handled both the return to grade 1 company and the nine-furlong distance with equal aplomb. Never really pushed during the race, he sailed home by three lengths. Unfortunately, that was the last win of his

		Storm Bird	Northern Dancer
	Storm Cat		South Ocean
		Terlingua	Secretariat
	Giant's Causeway '97		Crimson Saint
		Rahy	Blushing Groom (FR)
	Mariah's Storm		Glorious Song
		Immense	Roberto
	CARPE DIEM 2012		ImsoDear
		Unbridled	Fappiano
	Unbridled's Song		Caro (IRE)
		Trolley Song	Lucky Spell
	Rebridled Dreams '00		Danzig
		Corridor Key	*Turn-to
	Key Cents		Come My Prince
		Centimeter	Aloma's Ruler
			Penny One

career; after a shocking 10th-place finish in the Kentucky Derby—Presented by Yum! Brands (G1), he was initially pointed to the Belmont Stakes (G1), ended up passing on that race, and was retired six weeks later due to a knee chip. He ended his career having won four of his six starts with earnings of \$1,516,800, and was the only one of Giant’s Causeway’s sons to win grade 1 races on dirt at both 2 and 3.

Represented by 84 individual winners in 2021 including stakes winners Wait for Nairobi and Bella Aurora and grade 2-placed Thissmytime, Carpe Diem bankrolled over \$4.6 million in progeny earnings last year, compared to 57 winners and \$2.14 million for the late two-time Louisiana leading sire Half Ours (who was leading the Louisiana 2021 sire lists in both categories prior to Carpe Diem’s transfer). From the 328 named foals in Carpe Diem’s first three crops, he has sired 129 winners, including 54 that broke their maidens as juveniles—and, as might have been expected from his own racing performance, his progeny have tended to improve with maturity. He also seems to have been transmitting enough speed for his runners to be effective at a mile or less, while leaving the possi-

bility of getting two-turn runners open.

Giant's Causeway, the sire of Carpe Diem, needs little introduction. The 2000 European Horse of the Year, the son of Storm Cat and the important broodmare Mariah's Song (by Rahy) led the American general sire list three times and is the sire of the noteworthy stallions Shamardal, First Samurai, and Creative Cause. He is also the sire of the young sire sensation Not This Time, the leading second-crop stallion in 2021 and the sire of 17 stakes winners including potential 2022 Triple Crown hopeful Simplification from his first two crops.

On the dam's side, Carpe Diem has equally impressive pedigree credentials. He is out of the stakes-winning Unbridled's Song mare Rebridled Dreams, making him a half brother to 2010 Dixiana Breeders' Futurity winner J. B.'s Thunder (by Thunder Gulch), to multiple grade 2 winner Farrell (by Malibu Moon), to Group 3-placed multiple stakes winner Doncaster Rover (by War Chant), and to Grade 2-placed Semper Fortis (by Distorted Humor). Rebridled Dreams, in turn, is out of multiple New York stakes winner Key Cents (by the Danzig horse Corridor Key), whose dam Centimeter (by 1982 Preakness Stakes, G1, winner Aloma's Ruler) is a half sister to stakes winner Onproviso (by Wajima).

Wait for Nairobi, one of Carpe Diem's leading performers, is out of a mare by the Storm Cat son Tabasco Cat, so it appears that Storm Cat inbreeding need not be avoided with Carpe Diem provided that the mare is free of the offset knees commonly passed down by Storm Cat. The Danzig line also appears to be a promising cross, although the same caveat applies



regarding knee problems, and other pedigree elements that may work well with Carpe Diem include A.P. Indy, Blushing Groom, and non-Fappiano lines of Mr. Prospector, particularly Carson City and Forty Niner.

In conformation, Carpe Diem is what might be expected from his high price as a 2-year-old: a good-sized, handsome, lengthy individual. Blessed with the strong body, hip, and hindquarters typical of the Storm Cat tribe, he is somewhat leggier than most of that lineage thanks to the influence of Unbridled's Song. His shoulder is well angled and he is muscular without being coarse or blocky, making him a good choice both for a strongly made mare that needs a bit of leg added to her foals and for a lightly made mare that needs more muscle and power. All in all, he offers a complete package to mare owners and should be a welcome addition to Louisiana breeders' options.